

Riverbank Park is Historic:

Riverbank Park was designed by the Olmstead Brothers, who designed Central Park in New York. It was built on land which was originally the Edward Balbach and Sons Newark Smelting and Refining Works, one of the city's major industries, as well as the Morris Canal. By the end of the nineteenth century, the river and canal were replaced by rail, as a way to transport goods, and industries were relocated. In turn, the land was designated as Riverbank Park. Franklin Murphy, a governor of New Jersey and founder of the Newark YMCA, and the Essex County Parks Commission, wrote in 1910, "although it is the smallest of the twelve parks even in its unfinished state, it is one of the most largely used, and is an excellent example of the wisdom and importance of locating breathing spaces in thickly settled portions of the community."

Riverbank Park Key Dates:

Community Sees Plans for Baseball Stadium in Park in Maplewood newspaper—April 1996.

Riverbank Park Coalition sponsors its first community meeting about the proposal to destroy Riverbank Park and replace it with two stadiums at Wolff Memorial Presbyterian Church—July 1996.

SPARK (Save the Park at Riverbank) is Created.

Public Hearing Held by County in Ironbound where 3000 petitioners sign, voicing their angry opposition to the plan—October 15, 1996

Very next night: City and County Vote to Spend Money on Baseball Stadium

Special Election Held where Ironbound residents vote "no" to the proposal to issue bonds to construct the two stadiums—March 11, 1997
Citywide the Vote was Lost, in Ironbound was Won.

The Newark Preservation and Historic Landmark Commission vote to recommend Riverbank Park as an historic site—April 1, 1997.

SPARK and Ironbound residents win a victory:
City changes site for Baseball Stadium—September 24, 1997.

Riverbank Park Science Team Develops Remediation Plan—Fall of 1997
Plan Approved by DEP—1998

County Passes \$4.5 in Funds to Remediate Park—July 8, 1998.

Riverbank Park Mural Project: Over 20 Youth Group Create Murals for Construction Fence—Fall 1998.

Riverbank Declared A Historic Site—April 1999

SPARK Wins National Quality of Life Award from EPA—April 21, 1999.
Construction Work Begun at Riverbank Park—May 1999.

Friends of Riverbank Park Incorporated—January 2000.

Proposed Opening of Riverbank: Spring 2001

For more information regarding SPARK updates and meetings please call:

Ironbound Community Corporation: 973-589-3353